

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 103234 TOSEC 040023  
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:MDRAPER/HLK  
APPROVED BY NEA - ALFRED L. ATHERTON, JR.  
S/S SGOLDSMITH

-----060136Z 032108 /61

O 060105Z MAY 77 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 103234 TOSEC 040023

NODIS  
FOR SECRETARY FROM ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, US, SY

SUBJECT: TALKER FOR BRIEFING PRESIDENT CARTER ON HIS  
MEETING WITH ASAD

1. THERE FOLLOW POINTS FOR YOUR USE IN BRIEFING PRESIDENT  
CARTER FOR HIS MAY 9 MEETING WITH PRESIDENT ASAD.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

--ASAD IS SHREWD AND CAUTIOUS, BUT PRAGMATIC. HE POSSESSES  
EXTRAORDINARY SELF-ASSURANCE AND PATIENCE. HE WILL  
CONFIDENTLY RETREAT FROM AN UNDESIRABLE OR INDEFENSIBLE  
POSITION WITHOUT APOLOGY. HE HAS BROUGHT STABILITY AND  
ECONOMIC PROGRESS TO SYRIA FOR VIRTUALLY THE FIRST TIME  
IN THE COUNTRY'S MODERN HISTORY. HE WILL TEND TO BE THE  
LISTENER IN THIS MEETING, BUT HE CAN BE DRAWN OUT.

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--HE COMES TO THIS MEETING REINFORCED BY WHAT APPARENTLY WAS  
IN SYRIAN EYES A SUCCESSFUL VISIT TO MOSCOW IN APRIL,  
WHERE THE SOVIETS TRIED--WITH PROMISES OF ADDED MILITARY  
AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE--TO MAKE AMENDS FOR THEIR HEAVY-  
HANDED OPPOSITION TO SYRIAN INVOLVEMENT IN LEBANON IN  
1976. ASAD ALSO HAS RECENTLY RE-ESTABLISHED A MORE  
COOPERATIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH ARAFAT WHOM, HOWEVER,

HE CONTINUES TO DISTRUST.

--THE MOSCOW COMMUNIQUE MENTIONED THAT THE PLO SHOULD BE REPRESENTED AT GENEVA IN A POSITION OF EQUALITY WITH THE OTHER PARTIES "AND FROM THE VERY BEGINNING." THE LAST PHRASE REPORTEDLY WAS INSERTED AT ASAD'S INSISTENCE. NEVERTHELESS, THERE IS CONSIDERABLE EVIDENCE THAT HE IS STILL THINKING THROUGH SUCH ISSUES AS A POSSIBLE LINK BETWEEN A PALESTINIAN WEST BANK ENTITY AND JORDAN. IT WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENT IF, AS A RESULT OF YOUR MEETING, HE WERE ENCOURAGED TO DISCUSS WITH SADAT AND HUSSEIN ALTERNATIVE FORMULAS FOR PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION AT GENEVA.

--OUR PRINCIPAL GOALS IN THIS MEETING WILL BE: (1) TO GAIN ASAD'S CONFIDENCE IN THE SERIOUSNESS AND OBJECTIVITY OF OUR COMMITMENT; (2) TO STIMULATE MORE CONCRETE AND DETAILED SYRIAN THINKING ON WORKABLE FORMULAS FOR PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION AT GENEVA; (3) TO ENCOURAGE GREATER SYRIAN FLEXIBILITY TOWARD THE IDEA OF RELATIONSHIPS WITH ISRAEL IN THE CONTEXT OF A SETTLEMENT; AND (4) TO IMPRESS ON ASAD OUR STRONG WISH TO IMPROVE AND BROADEN OUR WARMING BILATERAL RELATIONS.

--REGARDING PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION, NOTE THAT WE DO NOT SEE HOW THE PLO CAN BE BROUGHT INITIALLY INTO THE NEGOTIATIONS AS A SEPARATE DELEGATION GIVEN ITS POSITION REGARDING ISRAEL. RAISE WITH ASAD SEVERAL OF THE  
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PRINCIPAL ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS FOR OTHER FORMS OF PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION AND PRESS FOR HIS VIEWS ON EACH OF THEM.

--SAY THAT WHILE WE BELIEVE THE PALESTINIANS MUST HAVE A HOMELAND AND ASSUME THAT, GEOGRAPHICALLY, THE WEST BANK AND POSSIBLY GAZA WOULD BE A MAIN CENTER OF THE HOMELAND, A FULLY INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE WOULD BE EXTREMELY HARD TO ACHIEVE IN THE FACE OF ISRAELI OPPOSITION. WHAT ARE THE SYRIAN VIEWS ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF THE PALESTINIANS ACCEPTING SOME LINKAGE WITH JORDAN--A SOLUTION WHICH WOULD BE MUCH EASIER TO ACHIEVE?

--IN DISCUSSING THE NATURE OF THE FINAL PEACE, SAY THAT WE UNDERSTAND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS OF NORMALIZING RELATIONS BUT THAT WE BELIEVE SOME MOVES IN THIS DIRECTION ARE ESSENTIAL IF THERE IS TO BE A SETTLEMENT INVOLVING EXTENSIVE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL. NORMALIZATION NEED NOT BE ALL AT ONCE, AND CAN BE STAGED OUT ALONG WITH OTHER ASPECTS

OF A SETTLEMENT. NOTE THAT SOME FORM OF DIRECT COMMUNICATION BETWEEN ISRAEL AND NEIGHBORING ARAB GOVERNMENTS

WOULD HAVE PRACTICAL VALUE IN IRONING OUT DIFFICULTIES OF IMPLEMENTING A SETTLEMENT AND FORESTALLING UNINTENTIONAL CONFRONTATIONS.

--SYRIAN DESIRE FOR A UNIFIED ARAB DELEGATION IS BASED MAINLY ON THE FEAR THAT ISRAEL AND THE U.S. MIGHT ATTEMPT TO SPLIT THE ARABS AND MAKE SEPARATE AGREEMENTS, AND ON THE SUSPICION THAT EGYPT WOULD GO ITS OWN WAY. ASSURE ASAD THAT WE BELIEVE ARAB UNITY TO BE ESSENTIAL TO SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATIONS.

--PROBE FOR ASAD'S THINKING ON A POSSIBLE SOVIET ROLE IN THE PEACEMAKING PROCESS AND FOR HIS ASSESSMENT ABOUT SOVIET AIMS IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

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--IN PRIVATE SESSION, MENTION OUR APPRECIATION FOR THE STEPS ASAD HAS TAKEN TO GIVE EQUAL RIGHTS TO SYRIAN JEWRY AND OUR HOPE THAT RESTRICTIONS ON JEWISH EMIGRATION WILL BE EASED.

END TEXT. CHRISTOPHER

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PAGE 01 STATE 103234  
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

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DRAFTED BY:S/S:PSEBASTIAN:JLH  
APPROVED BY/S/S-MR. SEBASTIAN

-----061515Z 049237 /46

O 061439Z MAY 77 ZFF4  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 103234

NODIS  
WHITE HOUSE FOR AARON

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE SENT ACTION USDEL SECRETARY 060105Z  
MAY 77.

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END TEXT. CHRISTOPHER  
UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Concepts:** TOSEC, PALESTINIANS, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, CAT-B, BRIEFING MATERIALS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, CHIEFS OF STATE MEETINGS, REPRESENTATIONAL ACTIVITIES, NEGOTIATIONS, PEACE PLANS  
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**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Message ID:** dab20799-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
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**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
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**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
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**TAGS:** PFOR, PEPR, US, SY, XF, PLO, (VANCE, CYRUS R), (ASAD, HAFIZ), (CARTER, JIMMY)  
**To:** SECRETARY  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/dab20799-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009